Corporate Teamwork and Diversity Statements in College Recruitment Brochures: Effects on Attraction[1]

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Organizations are increasingly emphasizing group work or teamwork as a source of competitive advantage in a diverse workforce. It has been suggested that such organizations must target their recruitment efforts at applicants who are both diverse and amenable to working in teams. Data were collected from 181 undergraduates at a large northeastern university who viewed a recruitment brochure of a fictitious firm in which statements about teamwork and diversity were manipulated. Results indicate that applicants' teamwork attitude moderated the relationship between teamwork statements and applicant attraction to the organization. Minority and gender status moderated the relationship between diversity statements and applicant attraction. These results provide evidence that organizations can target specific applicant characteristics with appropriate statements in recruitment brochures.

Two trends in the United States workforce seem to be at odds with one another and yet, increasingly, we understand them to be linked. One of those trends—the growth in the use of work groups and teams—presents management with the challenge of finding effective practices for managing teams in ways that optimize the organization's competitive advantage. As of the mid-1990s, approximately 70% of *Fortune* 1000 companies were using teams and were planning to increase their use of teams in the future (Chen & Barshes, 2000). Globally, the use of work teams has gained popularity, but particularly in organizations based in the United States (Chen & Barshes, 2000). Increased globalization is often cited as the primary factor increasing the adoption of teamwork by United States firms (e.g., Mohrman, Mohrman, & Lawler, 1992).

At the same time that the use of work teams is increasing, a second trend, growth in workforce diversity, makes it more likely that work teams are heterogeneous. Results from the 2000 current U.S. population survey indicated that

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46.5% of employed workers were female, 11.3% were Black, and 10.7% were of Hispanic origin (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2001). A growing number of organizations are attempting to improve the inclusiveness of underrepresented groups through proactive efforts to manage diversity (Gilbert, Stead, & Ivancevich, 1999). In addition, an increasing number of new organizations are recognizing demographic shifts that are affecting their marketplace (Thaler-Carter, 2001), and they are internationalizing their business operations (Zahra, Ireland, & Hitt, 2000), both of which result in a need to recognize and value diversity.

Although there are challenges associated with managing work teams and diversity that researchers are only beginning to understand (e.g., Ely & Thomas, 2001; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998), there is an increasing awareness of the untapped potential that they can provide to those organizations that manage them effectively (e.g., Cox & Blake, 1991; Ely & Thomas, 2001; Knouse & Dansby, 1999; Wright, Ferris, Hillier, & Kroll, 1995). Practitioners and academics alike have advocated diversity and teamwork as sources of competitive advantage. For example, 79% of top executives say self-managed teams will increase productivity for U.S. companies (Sullivan, 1999).

While diversity in work groups complicates management of these groups, it is argued increasingly that organizational initiatives to increase both can be synergistic in that workforce diversity can enhance work-group effectiveness (e.g., Cox, 1991; Jackson, 1992; Morrison, 1992; Thomas, 1991), if managed appropriately. This view is based on the notion that diversity is a key component to the success of work groups and teams in organizations because it creates a broader range of experience and values on which to draw (Kanter, 1983; Thompson, 1998).

Unfortunately, while many would argue that a potential competitive advantage exists for organizations that focus on diversity and teamwork, the research indicates that this potential often is not realized by organizations (e.g., Williams & O'Reilly, 1998). There is a challenge associated with adopting employer policies and practices that fully utilize existing diversity and the abilities of current employees to work in groups. Clearly, it is important for employers with a team-oriented culture to identify those policies and practices that will be successful. However, equally important to organizations that pursue diversity and work-team cultures as a way to achieve competitive advantage is their ability to attract and hire diverse applicants or those who are well suited to group work or teamwork. Professionals recognize this need: The ability to work in teams is a characteristic that many of the "100 best companies to work for" (as rated by *Fortune* magazine; Martin, 1998) use in their selection process.

Practitioner literature has advised organizations to revise their recruitment materials to portray their organizations as teamwork oriented and committed to diversity, with the expectation that such changes will result in a more desirable

applicant pool (e.g., Miller, 1994; "Professionwide Recruiting Campaign Launched," 1993; Thaler-Carter, 2001). It appears that employers are indeed heeding this advice. Our examination of the college recruitment brochures of 22 organizations at a college job fair found that 9 had explicit statements regarding diversity or equal-employment opportunity and 13 referred to teamwork or working as a "part of a team."

While traditional recruitment research has focused on the fit between the job applicant and the job (person–job fit; e.g., Hedge & Teachout, 1992; O'Reilly, Caldwell, & Mirable, 1992), the person–organization fit perspective suggests that those applicants who "fit" the organization should be more attracted to it than those that do not. (See Kristof, 1996, for a review of this literature.) This interactionist perspective suggests that person–organization fit exists when people are attracted to organizations that they perceive as having values and norms similar to their own (Chatman, 1989). Recent research and practitioner interest in person–organization fit can be traced largely to attraction-selection-attrition theory (Schneider, 1987), which suggests that people are attracted to organizations with similar values and goals to their own (Cable & Parsons, 2001).

The person–organization fit perspective suggests that recruitment messages found in brochures and other organizational recruitment mediums should allow individual applicants to assess the fit between the organization and themselves. Consistent with the attraction-selection-attrition framework, research has shown that job applicants self-select into organizations based on person–organization fit (e.g., Cable & Judge, 1996; Tom, 1971) and that person–organization fit is related to the attraction of job seekers (e.g., Judge & Cable, 1997; Rynes & Gerhart, 1990). To the extent that applicant attraction is related to recruitment messages, organizations should be able to attract a particular type of applicant and to target particular recruitment outcomes (e.g., a higher percentage of minority applicants). A person–organization fit perspective would thus suggest that individuals whose values and goals are most consistent with organizational values of diversity and teamwork should express greater attraction to firms that advertise those policies in their recruitment processes.

While past studies have suggested that person–organization fit is related to attraction, and there are theoretical reasons to believe that recruitment messages about diversity and teamwork will influence applicant attraction, there is little empirical evidence that organizations touting these messages are effective in recruiting applicants who value teamwork positively. The only study examining the impact of teamwork on applicant attraction focused entirely on pay policy. In that study, Cable and Judge (1994) found that among U.S. job seekers, those who were highly individualistic were more attracted to an organization with individual-based pay than to one with team-based pay, while the opposite was true for those who were highly collectivistic. Similarly, Williams and Bauer (1994) presented the only study to examine the impact of diversity messages on

applicant attraction using minority and nonminority respondents. They found that while undergraduate management students were more attracted to an organization depicted in a recruitment brochure as having a "managing diversity policy," the effects were not stronger for women or minorities (as would be suggested by a person–organization fit perspective). However, the generalizability of their study results was limited because they had a relatively small number of minorities in the sample (about 15%).

The intent of the present paper is to investigate further the effects of messages about diversity and to examine the effects of messages about teamwork on applicant attraction of college students. Of key concern is whether or not organizational efforts through recruitment brochures targeting recruitment of college students that are (a) more diverse, and (b) amenable to working in groups or teams, are indeed successful; and if so, to what extent. In doing so, this paper contributes to the broader literature on recruitment by further investigating organizational messages, their effects on the composition of applicant pools, and the resulting fit between them. As Barber (1998) pointed out, we know little about these effects, yet understanding the impact of early recruitment efforts by organizations is of critical importance. Key outcomes of this stage include the identification and attraction of sufficient potential candidates that meet the organization's needs regarding qualifications, demographics, and other characteristics; a process that ultimately determines recruitment success (Boudreau & Rynes, 1985). In addition, early recruitment efforts impact post-hire outcomes, such as the attitudes and behaviors of individuals not yet in the applicant pool, the later beliefs and expectations of applicants as they proceed through the hiring process (referred to as *anticipatory socialization*; Cable, Aiman-Smith, Mulvey, & Edwards, 2000), performance, and turnover (Barber, 1998).

Hypothesis Development

Teamwork

Teamwork refers to the degree to which work is organized and performed within the organization by individuals acting as teams. Much has been written about the difficulty of building teams and sustaining their performance over time (e.g., Boss, 1995; Holpp, 1997; McNerney, 1994). Increasingly, organizations that use teamwork recognize the importance of hiring applicants that fit well in a team-oriented culture (e.g., Cohen, 1996). Empirical evidence has suggested that teams with members who have a high degree of collectivism (versus individualism) have better performance (e.g., Driskell & Salas, 1997; Wagner, 1995), and teams with members that display more team-oriented behavior are more productive (Watson, Johnson, & Merritt, 1998). Obviously, organizations with teamwork policies should be concerned with seeking team-oriented individuals.

The person–organization fit perspective suggests that applicants will be more attracted to those organizations that share similar values to their own or that "match" their personalities or dispositions (Kristof, 1996). This would suggest that individuals who have a positive attitude toward teamwork should express greater attraction to organizations that utilize teamwork than those that do not. Similarly, individuals who have a positive attitude toward working alone or independently should express greater attraction to organizations that utilize individual work than those that do not. As mentioned earlier, there is some evidence that this is the case. Using a sample of 171 college students, Cable and Judge (1994) conducted a policy-capturing study in which participants were presented with 32 discrete scenarios manipulating, among other things, whether or not the organization used team-based pay or individual-based pay. Participants were then asked to rate the attractiveness of the organization as measured by their willingness to pursue employment. Using an adapted individualism–collectivism scale, Cable and Judge found that participants who were more individualistic expressed greater attraction to the individual-based pay plans, while collectivistic participants preferred the group-based pay plan.

While the individualism–collectivism scale used by Cable and Judge (1994) is a more global measure (rather than focused exclusively on teamwork attitude), this research does suggest that organizations can attract individuals more suited to teamwork by advertising their team policies. We expect, then, that individuals who have a positive attitude (cognitions, affect, and behavioral tendencies) toward teamwork (teamwork attitude) will be more attracted to an organization when it sends messages about the importance of teamwork in their workplace than when it does not. On the other hand, applicants who have negative attitudes toward teamwork will be less attracted to an organization when it sends messages about the importance of teamwork than when it does not. Therefore, our first hypothesis states the following:

> *Hypothesis 1.* There will be a positive interaction between attitudes toward teamwork and the teamwork orientation of an organization such that individuals with a positive attitude toward teamwork will be more attracted to organizations using teamwork than those who are not predisposed to working in teams. By contrast, individuals with a positive attitude toward teamwork will be less attracted to organizations using individual work than those who are not predisposed to working in teams.

Diversity

As a result of equal employment legislation and the increasing diversity of the U.S. workforce, organizations have been creating new policies regarding the management of cultural diversity. Much of the emphasis of these policies is on

providing job opportunities, equity in compensation, and opportunities for advancement to members of minority groups. However, diversity encompasses many aspects of group composition (Jackson & Ruderman, 1995), including diversity of thought that is believed to result in greater creativity, quality of thought, decision making, innovation, and problem solving (Cox & Blake, 1991; Nemeth, 1992). The notion is that by recognizing and valuing diversity in all its forms, the organization achieves two goals by (a) becoming more inviting to minority applicants; and (b) capitalizing on the creativity, knowledge, and expertise of a multicultural workforce.

As employers increasingly target their recruitment efforts to attract a diverse workforce, they should find that their efforts are paying off in more diverse hires (Thaler-Carter, 2001). However, there are at least two compelling reasons for believing that attention to diversity may not be appealing to all applicants. First, person–organization fit theory suggests that individuals who perceive that they do not fit into a culture of diversity or that diversity is contrary to their values and norms would express less attraction to organizations that value diversity. Second, social justice research suggests that potential applicants will have an egocentric bias toward organizations whose policies are seen as personally beneficial and, by contrast, a bias against organizations whose policies are not seen as personally beneficial (Greenberg, 1981; Grover, 1991). Thus, applicants will be more attracted to organizations committed to diversity if they perceive themselves to be the beneficiary of the diversity policies and practices.

Because diversity recruitment is often targeted at minorities and women, it is likely that these individuals will perceive the organization's values and norms as having a better fit with their own. By contrast, nonminorities and males may be more likely to perceive that diversity values and norms are inconsistent with their own or that they do not fit with this culture. Further, while women and minorities are more likely to perceive that they will be the beneficiaries of diversity policies and practices, nonminority applicants and male applicants are more likely to perceive that they will not benefit from these policies and may be more likely to view them as a threat.

However, we do not believe that the effects of perceived fit and benefits of diversity policies will be of the same magnitude for each group. Rather, we expect that the negative effect of diversity messages will be strongest for nonminority males because they are most likely to perceive both less fit and that these policies will interfere with their own career goals. Kossek and Zonia (1994) argued that White males have a greater tendency to hold values favoring individualism in the Anglo-Saxon culture and that these values conflict with multiculturalism. Further, White males are reported to perceive that their own career advancement has been limited by efforts to increase diversity in the workplace (Deutch, 1991; Heilman, McCullough, & Gilbert, 1996). White males also have been found to feel less attachment to organizations with racial and gender

diversity, as measured by absenteeism, intention to stay with the organization, and psychological commitment (Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992). Efforts to remove barriers for women and minorities, including recruiting materials showing women and minorities as role models (Miller, 1994; "Professionwide Recruiting Campaign Launched," 1993), may spark concern about reverse discrimination among White males who may, in turn, view diversity as a negative component of an organization's environment. Male, nonminority applicants may fear that they will be at a disadvantage in such organizations (Kossek & Zonia, 1992). Consequently, we expect that White males will express the lowest levels of attraction to an organization that communicates diversity policies.

By contrast, women and minorities should perceive both that they will fit better in organizations that communicate the value of diversity than those that do not and that they will benefit from the diversity policies and practices of such organizations. Published lists, such as *Fortune*'s "50 Best Companies for Asian, Blacks, and Hispanics" (Johnson, 1998) and *Fortune*'s "100 Best Companies to Work for in America" (Levering & Moskowitz, 1998), have promoted the belief that women and minorities may be more apt to succeed in an environment that values diversity. Thus, it is likely that women and minorities will view these organizations more favorably than organizations without diversity policies. As members of two protected classes, minority women should have the most to gain from diversity policies, and we expect that, among the groups, they would have the highest levels of attraction to organizations that value diversity.

Previous research examining the impact of minority status on attraction to organizations with diversity policies provides some support for the notion that minority candidates will respond more favorably to diversity policies than nonminority candidates. For example, Highhouse, Stierwalt, Bachiochi, Elder, and Fisher (1999) found that among a sample of African American engineers and engineering students, respondents were more attracted to an organization when it advertised an affirmative action policy, as compared to an equal opportunity employment policy. On the other hand, Kravitz (1995) found that White respondents preferred equal opportunity employment policies to affirmative action policies.

The one study to address the issue of whether or not cultural diversity policies result in differential levels of attraction by job applicants of different gender or race provided mixed evidence. Williams and Bauer (1994) presented 448 students enrolled in upper-level undergraduate management courses with different versions of a recruitment brochure manipulating the organization's position on cultural diversity management. Using a scale similar to that used by Cable and Judge (1994), they measured applicant attraction to the organization. Their findings indicate that, regardless of gender or minority status, potential applicants were more attracted to the organization when it was depicted as valuing cultural diversity than when it was not. Interestingly, however, Williams and Bauer (1994) found no empirical support for the hypothesis that minorities and women

would view the organizations with cultural diversity policies more favorably than would nonminorities and males.

Williams and Bauer's (1994) findings suggest, then, that cultural diversity statements in organizational recruitment brochures do not have a negative impact on organizational attraction of nonminorities and males. However, there are features of their study that may account for these unanticipated findings. First, as noted earlier, only 15% of their sample was minority. Second, because the colleges they sampled from are in areas where minority populations are quite low, it is less likely that the participants viewed cultural-diversity commitment as a threat to their own employment opportunities. We expect that in areas where there is more diversity in the college and community populations, diversity policies will present a greater threat to the employment and career-advancement opportunities of nonminorities and males because of the impact on competition in the job market. Third, Williams and Bauer compared minorities to nonminorities and women to men. They did not include a gender and minority status interaction to compare subgroups (e.g., nonminority females to minority females). Finally, Williams and Bauer manipulated cultural diversity management by the presence or absence of diversity statements. Past research on organizational recruitment has suggested that the mere presence of information, even negative information, has a positive influence on applicant perceptions about the organization. These features of their research design make it difficult to determine whether the effects they observed would be generalizable outside their sample or research design. We attempt to address these design issues in our study.

Thus, our hypotheses predict the following three-way interaction among gender, minority status, and diversity statements:

> *Hypothesis 2.* Among nonminorities, women will view organizations with statements that demonstrate commitment to diversity more favorably than those without such statements; and men will view organizations with statements that demonstrate commitment to diversity less favorably than those without such statements.

> *Hypothesis 3.* Among minorities, both men and women will view organizations with statements that demonstrate commitment to diversity more favorably than those without such statements, with a stronger positive effect resulting for women than for men.

Method

Sample

Participants were 181 undergraduate students enrolled in upper-level courses at a large northeastern university. Participants' majors were business

(51%, $N = 93$), representing accounting, finance, management, and marketing), economics (26%, $N = 43$), and communications (23%, $N = 42$). The sample was quite diverse: 50.3% ($N = 91$) of the participants were female; and 66.8% ($N = 121$) were nonminority, 10.5% ($N = 19$) were African American, 14.4% ($N = 26$) were Asian, 5.0% ($N = 9$) were Hispanic/Latino, and 3.3% ($N = 6$) were of another ethnicity.

The university campus itself has a minority enrollment of almost 30%. The average age of study participants was 21.4 years, the average grade point average (GPA) was 3.2, and 88.4% expected to graduate within a year and a half of the survey date. While these participants were not necessarily searching for permanent, full-time jobs at the time of the study, they were likely to do so in the near future. In addition, they were likely to have searched for, or currently be searching for, related professional internships. No individuals indicated prior knowledge about the study on a probe question presented to each participant after the study was completed.

Materials

The stimulus used in this study was a four-page (8.5 in. × 11 in. [21.59 cm × 27.94 cm]), professionally designed recruitment brochure of a fictitious management consulting firm. We chose to depict a management consulting firm to increase the appeal of the organization to a variety of majors, including nonbusiness majors, hence increasing the students' interest in the study as a whole. (While the nature of the business chosen may have an impact on the overall attraction of students to the company, there is no reason to think it would influence the interaction effects being investigated here.)

To ensure that our brochure was realistic and credible, brochures of 22 organizations similar in size to the one created for this study were examined for content. These brochures tended to discuss a variety of issues, including the organization's history, client base, financial strength, information technology, and career-development services. Consequently, our brochure, in addition to making statements about the organization's emphasis on teamwork and diversity, discussed these issues. This also allowed us to assess the impact of teamwork and diversity statements when they are embedded within the context of other information.

The recruitment brochures were created to vary the text and visual material regarding teamwork and diversity in a 2 × 2 × 2 × 2 format (Level of Teamwork Text × Level of Teamwork Photographs × Level of Diversity Text × Level of Diversity Photographs), resulting in 16 different versions. Williams and Bauer (1994) suggested that the photographs used in their study might have contributed to their findings, although their post hoc analysis did not support this. This study design allows us to determine directly whether or not photographs were

important in sending messages about the organization in light of the textual information. Analyses that parallel those presented in this paper did not reveal any statistically significant effects of the photos. Further, analyses that incorporated both the photograph and the text manipulations (and interactions) did not reveal any impact of the photographs on applicant attraction. To simplify the presentation of results, the analyses and results presented here discuss only the text manipulation.[3]

Two levels were used to depict work as being performed by individuals or teamwork. In the text, individual work organization was expressed through direct statements about working individually and valuing individual performance. In the teamwork condition, statements about working together and valuing group performance replaced these statements. In the following example from the brochure, individual work manipulations are in boldface, and the teamwork manipulations replacing them are in brackets. The brochure reads, "*Individual effort* [Teamwork] is an essential ingredient to our success. Each *of our associates* [team] has a broad range of skills, viewpoints, and experiences." In all cases, every effort was made to ensure that the statement lengths were approximately equal.

Two levels were used to depict high commitment and low commitment to diversity at the organization. In the text, high commitment was expressed with statements regarding the importance of diversity as part of the organization's environment. Because it would not be realistic for an organization to have statements that explicitly indicate a disdain for diversity, low commitment was expressed through statements about the importance of tradition, with no mention of diversity. In the following example from the brochure, statements depicting low diversity are in italics, and the high-diversity manipulations replacing them are in brackets. The brochure reads,

> Our organization recognizes the value of *tradition* [cultural diversity] in serving clients and in creating an ideal environment for our associates. We value associates who *share the traditional values and beliefs our organization embodies* [can bring different viewpoints and backgrounds to share with each other].

The manipulation was designed to communicate both a commitment and an openness to cultural diversity, as well as diversity of thought. While we could have chosen to make no statement for the low-diversity condition, we were aware

[3]Through photographs, using either culturally diverse participants or nonminority participants, individuals were shown either working alone or working together in groups. Minority and nonminority participants were posed in the same settings and positions to ensure to the extent possible that the only differences in photographs were those intended for the manipulation. Photographs were piloted to ensure that the message was consistent with that intended (e.g., individual work/teamwork, no diversity/diversity). Results from the pilot test and results from the analysis of the impact of photographs in the study are available from the first author.

that applicants tend to respond more favorably to organizations that provide more information (regardless of information content; e.g., Barber & Roehling, 1993; Gatewood, Gowan, & Lautenschlager, 1993). Therefore, we wanted to keep the length of the manipulation statements under various conditions as equal as possible.

Six questions were used to check whether or not the manipulations resulted in the intended perceptions regarding the organization. These questions were presented after the questions measuring the dependent variables and were embedded within a larger set of questions. Responses were statistically different between the groups such that groups exposed to the teamwork and diversity manipulations were more likely to perceive the organization as having teamwork and commitment to diversity, respectively. Manipulation-check items were ranked on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*): "This company offers many opportunities to interact with other people at work," $d = 0.65$, $t(179) = 4.49$, $p < .001$; "This company encourages teamwork," $d = 1.37$, $t(179) = 9.73$, $p < .001$; "Work at this company is accomplished through teamwork," $d = 1.15$, $t(179) = 8.55$, $p < .001$; and "This company offers attractive opportunities to women and minorities," $d = 0.50$, $t(179) = 4.09$, $p < .001$; "This company offers equal opportunity for all," $d = 0.48$, $t(179) = 3.75$, $p < .001$, "This company values diversity," $d = 0.82$, $t(178) = 6.03$, $p < .001$.

Measures

Organizational attraction. Our measure of organizational attraction consisted of three items requiring participants to indicate their interest in pursuing employment opportunities with the company (Cronbach's $\alpha = .91$). The items were behavioral intentions regarding pursuing employment opportunities ("I am interested in pursuing employment opportunities with this company"), believing they would like to work for the company, and signing up for a campus interview with the company. Participants were asked to rate each statement on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*) to indicate interest in pursuing employment with the organization.

Individual characteristics. Three individual characteristics hypothesized to be related to teamwork and diversity were measured: teamwork attitude, gender, and ethnicity. Respondents indicated their gender (0 = female, 1 = male) and ethnicity (minority race = 0, nonminority race = 1) on the questionnaire.

Though several scales exist to measure general individualism–collectivism (e.g., Early, 1989; Hofstede, 1980) or work-related individualism–collectivism (Steers & Braunstein, 1976; Wagner & Moch, 1986), our interest specifically was in measuring one's attitude toward teamwork. While individuals with collectivistic beliefs may be more likely to be team oriented, team-oriented individuals may not necessarily hold general collectivistic attitudes. Thus, adapting from these

various scales, and adding items of our own, we created a scale that was aimed specifically at assessing individual attitudes toward teamwork by measuring their affect (three items), cognitions (three items), and behaviors (three items) regarding teamwork. The nine 5-point Likert items (e.g., "I believe that teamwork can produce better results than individual efforts," "Working in teams stimulates innovation," "I prefer to work on group tasks rather than individual tasks," "Teams can more thoroughly evaluate options than any one individual can") had an alpha of .79. Teamwork attitude was measured after participants recorded their reactions to the brochure so as not to bias their responses. Factor analysis reveals that items loaded on their intended factors (Appendix).

Additional data. The questionnaire asked for additional demographic information (age, GPA, major, expected graduation date). Questions regarding applicant values and the organization that were unrelated to the specific intent of this study were included in the questionnaire to disguise the purpose of the study.

Procedure

Over a 4-week period, participants were recruited through flyers advertising the study and offering $10 for participation to undergraduate classes in business, economics, and communications. Participants attended sessions (about 1 hr each) in groups of 10 to 14 people. While random assignment of participants to specific sessions was not possible because we had no control over the students' schedules, brochures were randomly assigned to group sessions. All participants in a session received the same brochure to facilitate focus group discussions. Post hoc analyses of demographic variables showed no systematic differences across conditions, with one exception: Males were slightly more likely to be in the high-diversity condition than in the low-diversity condition.

At the start of each session, participants were asked to assume that they were in the university's Career Services Office reviewing company brochures for job opportunities. To make the exercise credible, they were told they were reviewing a draft of a real management consulting firm's recruitment brochure and that their feedback would be used to evaluate and, if necessary, revise the brochure. Participants were also told that the true company name was being withheld to ensure unbiased feedback regarding the recruitment materials.

During each session, participants read the brochure, completed a questionnaire, and then participated in a focus group discussion that was audiotaped. The intent of the focus group sessions was threefold. First, the focus group sessions lent credibility to our claim that this was an actual organization interested in obtaining their feedback. Second, we asked general questions about the brochure design and the company depicted to ascertain whether or not participants believed this was an actual organization while they were evaluating the brochure. Third, we used the focus group sessions to ask more general questions about

participants' recruitment experiences on this particular campus. After completing these activities, participants were fully debriefed as to the real purpose of the study and were given an opportunity to voice their concerns privately. No students expressed any discomfort or difficulty with the study design.

Analysis

Consistent with the results of the probe question, focus-group transcripts indicate that participants believed the premise of the study and that this was an actual organization. Only one student questioned whether this was a real organization.

Preliminary analyses were conducted to identify potentially confounding variables by examining correlations between the dependent variable and demographic variables and the distributions of those variables among the conditions. Hierarchical ordinary least squares (OLS) regression was used to test all hypotheses. In the first step, applicant attraction was regressed on relevant control variables and demographic variables. In the second step, teamwork attitude was added. In the third step, relevant main effects for the teamwork and diversity manipulations were added (individual work = 0, teamwork = 1; low diversity = 0, high diversity = 1). In the fourth step, the second-order interactions were added. In the final step, the three-way interaction between gender, nonminority, and the diversity manipulation was added. The significance and direction of the coefficient on the interactions determined support for the hypotheses.

Results

Preliminary analyses reveal no association between the dependent variable and age or GPA. In addition, responses of participants who were further from graduation were no different than responses of those who were close to graduation. Preliminary analyses reveal that communications majors reported slightly lower levels of attraction than did economics ($p < .04$) and business ($p < .06$) majors. Consequently, further analyses included a dummy variable (noncommunication major = 0, communication major = 1). Analyses also reveal that there was no interaction between the teamwork and diversity statements with regard to applicant attraction. In addition, comparisons between separate models and an omnibus model (presented here) reveal that the effects of the statements on applicant attraction were independent ($R^2 = .19, p < .05$).[4]

Descriptive statistics and intercorrelations for the variables employed in this study are presented in Table 1. The mean attraction score was 3.75, indicating that participants found the organization to be fairly attractive. The mean attraction scores under each of the conditions by the various subgroups are reported in Table 2 and show the magnitude of differences between the various

[4]The results of all preliminary analyses are available from the first author.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations Among Variables

Variable	*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Attraction	3.75	0.90	(.91)						
2. Teamwork	0.48	0.50	.06	—					
3. Diversity	0.53	0.50	.10	-.06	—				
4. Teamwork attitude	3.84	0.53	.09	.11	-.05	(.79)			
5. Gender	0.50	0.50	-.02	.16*	.18*	.14*	—		
6. Nonminority	0.66	0.48	-.12	-.01	-.12	.16*	.09	—	
7. Communication	0.23	0.42	-.16*	-.10	-.14	.08	-.20**	.08	—

Note. Alpha estimates are provided in parentheses on the diagonal where relevant. Teamwork: no teamwork = 0, teamwork = 1. Diversity: low diversity = 0, high diversity = 1. Gender: female = 0, male = 1. Nonminority: minority = 0, nonminority = 1. $*p < .05$. $**p < .01$.

groups. For example, there was a considerable difference in the attraction scores by teamwork condition for individuals with a positive teamwork attitude, while the difference for those with a negative attitude was somewhat smaller. Individuals with a negative teamwork attitude (≤1 *SD* below the mean) reported an average attraction score of 3.71 under the individual work condition versus 3.33 under the teamwork condition. By contrast, individuals with a positive teamwork attitude (≥1 *SD* above the mean) reported an average attraction score of 3.15 under the individual work condition versus 4.40 under the teamwork condition. Similarly, males who saw the high-diversity condition reported only slightly higher attraction scores than those who saw the low-diversity condition (3.70 vs. 3.74), while the difference for females was greater (3.62 vs. 3.96, respectively).

Results of the hierarchical regression analysis are presented in Table 3. Column 1 shows the unstandardized regression coefficients for the demographic variables and their standard errors, while Column 2 shows the standardized regression coefficients and indicates statistical significance. The results in Columns 5 and 6 indicate that after controlling for the demographic variables (major, gender, nonminority) and teamwork attitude, there were no main effects for either teamwork or diversity. However, Columns 7 and 8 indicate that, controlling for major, the interaction between the teamwork condition and participants' teamwork attitude was statistically significant ($p < .01$). Likewise, Columns 9 and 10 show that there was a significant three-way interaction between gender, nonminority, and diversity condition ($p < .05$). The model had an overall R^2 of .17 ($p < .01$).

Table 2

Mean Attraction Scores by Manipulation Condition and Subgroup

		Low diversity		High diversity		Total	
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Negative attitude	Individual work	3.86	0.63	3.58	0.92	3.71	0.78
	Teamwork	3.27	1.26	3.38	1.34	3.33	1.25
	Total	3.61	0.94	3.49	1.10	3.54	1.01
Positive attitude	Individual work	2.87	1.30	3.89	0.77	3.15	1.23
	Teamwork	4.42	0.53	4.39	0.49	4.40	0.49
	Total	3.65	1.24	4.22	0.60	3.85	1.08
Male	Individual work	3.41	1.01	3.67	0.73	3.58	0.83
	Teamwork	3.88	0.83	3.82	0.85	3.85	0.83
	Total	3.70	0.91	3.74	0.79	3.73	0.84
Female	Individual work	3.63	1.20	3.96	0.69	3.78	1.01
	Teamwork	3.60	0.95	3.96	0.80	3.75	0.90
	Total	3.62	1.09	3.96	0.72	3.77	0.95
Nonminority	Individual work	4.17	0.81	3.89	0.66	4.00	0.72
	Teamwork	3.69	0.79	3.88	0.85	3.80	0.82
	Total	3.93	0.82	3.89	0.74	3.90	0.77
Minority	Individual work	3.33	1.17	3.76	0.76	3.55	1.00
	Teamwork	3.76	0.94	3.86	0.82	3.81	0.88
	Total	3.55	1.07	3.80	0.78	3.67	0.95

Note. A negative attitude is defined as a teamwork attitude score ≤ 1 *SD* below the mean. A positive attitude is defined as a teamwork attitude score ≥ 1 *SD* above the mean.

Examination of the results (shown graphically in Figures 1, 2, and 3) reveals support for Hypothesis 1 and partial support for Hypotheses 2 and 3. Figure 1 shows that under the no-teamwork condition, participants with higher teamwork attitude reported lower attraction levels than did those with lower teamwork attitude. Under the teamwork condition, participants with higher teamwork attitude reported higher attraction levels than did those with lower teamwork attitude. Figure 2 illustrates that nonminority males were slightly less attracted to the organization when shown the high-diversity condition than when shown the low-diversity condition. Nonminority women, on the other hand, were more

Table 3

Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis Predicting Attraction

	Step 1			Step 2		
	b	*SE*	β	*b*	*SE*	β
Communication	-0.35	0.16	-0.16*	-0.37	0.16	-0.18*
Gender	-0.08	0.14	-0.05	-0.12	0.14	-0.07
Nonminority	-0.20	0.14	-0.11	-0.24	0.14	-0.13
Teamwork attitude				0.23	0.13	0.14
Teamwork						
Diversity						
Teamwork × Teamwork Attitude						
Gender × Diversity						
Nonminority × Diversity						
Gender × Nonminority						
Gender × Nonminority × Diversity						
Constant	4.01**	0.14		3.16**	0.48	
R^2		.04*			.06*	
Change in R^2					.02	

Note. n = 181. Cultural diversity: low cultural diversity = 0, high cultural diversity = 1. Gender: $^*p < .05$. $^{**}p < .01$.

attracted to the organization. Figure 3, however, shows that the pattern of results for minorities was not as predicted. Minority men who saw the high-diversity condition indicated greater attraction to the organization than did those shown the low-diversity condition. However, minority women who were shown the high-diversity condition were less attracted to the organization than were those who were shown the low-diversity condition. The difference in attraction for nonminority men and minority women under these conditions was quite small.

Discussion

This study used different versions of a recruitment brochure for a fictitious management consulting firm to test the effects of organizational statements and photographs regarding teamwork and diversity on applicant attraction to

Step 3			Step 4			Step 5		
b	*SE*	β	*b*	*SE*	β	*b*	*SE*	β
-0.35	0.16	-0.16*	-0.35	0.16	-0.17*	-0.36	0.16	-0.17*
-0.16	0.14	-0.09	-0.07	0.31	-0.04	-0.68	0.44	-0.38
-0.21	0.14	-0.11	-0.55	0.23	-0.29*	-0.75	0.25	-0.40**
0.23	0.13	0.14	-0.24	0.18	-0.14	-0.23	0.18	-0.13
0.08	0.14	0.05	-3.37	0.95	-1.88*	-3.18	0.95	-1.78**
0.17	0.14	0.09	0.00	0.26	0.00	-0.28	0.29	-0.16
			0.90	0.25	1.99**	0.84	0.25	1.87**
			-0.34	0.27	-0.17	0.54	0.52	0.28
			0.46	0.30	0.24	0.91	0.37	0.47*
			0.11	0.29	0.06	0.88	0.49	0.47
						-1.19	0.61	-0.53*
3.03**	0.50		5.02**	0.71		5.10**	0.71	
	.07*			.15**			.17**	
	.01			.08**			.02*	

female = 0, male = 1. Nonminority: minority = 0, nonminority = 1.

the organization. The purpose was to ascertain whether such statements were effective in generating an applicant pool that possessed the characteristics being targeted (i.e., diversity and positive teamwork attitude).

Our results suggest that teamwork and diversity statements in recruitment brochures do influence applicants' attraction to organizations. Further, the direction of the relationships depends on the teamwork attitude (for teamwork) and gender and minority status (for diversity) of the potential job applicants. Consistent with person–organization fit theory, we generally find that when there is a greater fit between the applicant's teamwork attitude and the statements about teamwork made by the organization, applicants express greater attraction to the organization.

The results for teamwork suggest that when organizations state that work is organized and performed via teamwork, there is a positive relationship between

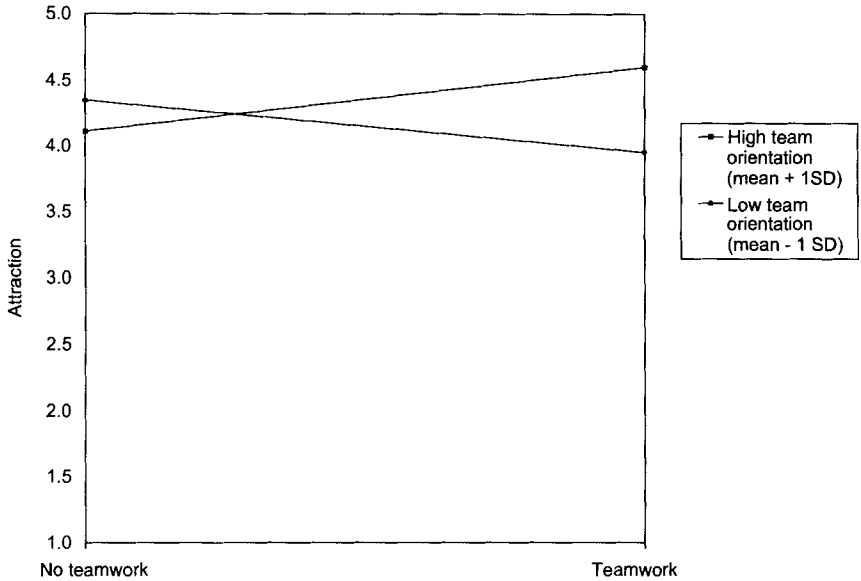

Figure 1. Applicant attraction as a function of participants' team attitude under the individual work and teamwork conditions.

team attitude of the individual and attraction to the organization. However, when work is depicted as an individual effort, teamwork attitude of the individual has a negative (though not statistically significant) effect on attraction. As a matter of practical interpretation and using the results from a regression of attraction on major, team attitude, and the teamwork manipulation, if everyone with an attraction score greater than 3.50 signed up for a campus interview, among a population of 500 potential applicants with teamwork attitude scores normally distributed ($\mu = 3.0$, $SD = 0.67$), 496 would pursue employment and their average teamwork attitude would be about 2.94 under the no-teamwork condition. Under the teamwork condition, only about 201 applicants would pursue employment and their average teamwork attitude score would be about 3.61. If such self-selection occurs, the hypothetical teamwork organization is left with a smaller pool of individuals with much more positive attitudes toward teamwork, as is presumably intended by organizations that make such statements.

With regard to diversity, the findings presented here, using a sample that was quite diverse in terms of the representation of women and minorities and allowing for a three-way interaction accounting for participants' gender and minority status combination, contradict those of Williams and Bauer (1994). We found support for the notion that the dampening impact of these policies on attraction of

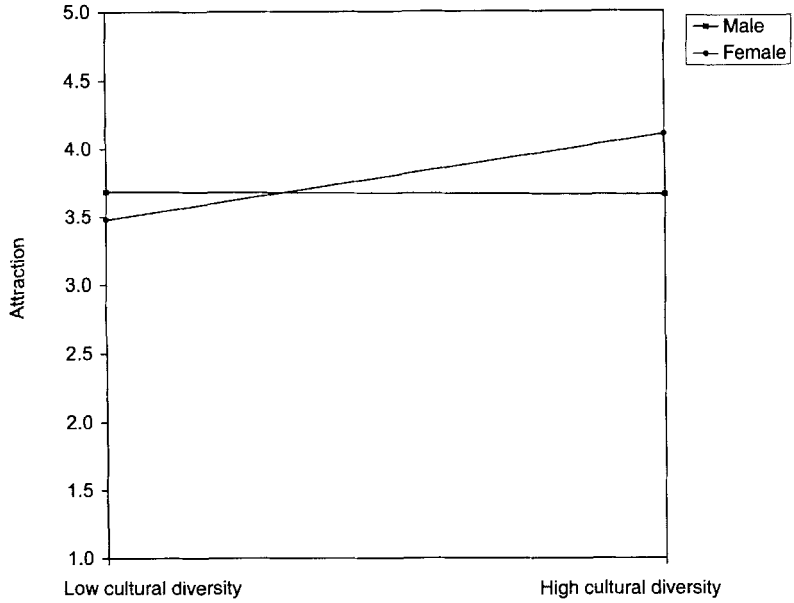

Figure 2. Applicant attraction for nonminorities as a function of participants' gender under low cultural diversity and high cultural diversity conditions.

nonminorities and males will be observed in an area that is more culturally diverse. The results suggest that organizations can, to a degree, attract applicant pools with greater proportionate representation of women and minorities by advertising diversity.

Minority men and nonminority women in the high-diversity condition found the organization to be more attractive than did those in the low-diversity condition. However, nonminority men and minority women in the high-diversity condition found the organization to be slightly less attractive than did those in the low-diversity condition. Again, an illustration helps to quantify the practical implications of these findings. For each combination of minority status and gender, we calculated the predicted attraction scores (assuming noncommunication major) from a regression of attraction on gender, nonminority, and the diversity manipulation. Assuming there is a larger population of attraction scores, normally distributed around the predicted score (SD = 0.67), we estimated the percentage of individuals who would pursue employment with the organization under the two conditions. When compared to the low-diversity condition, the high-diversity condition clearly attracted more nonminority women (72% vs. 50%) and minority males (74% vs. 45%). It is also encouraging that high

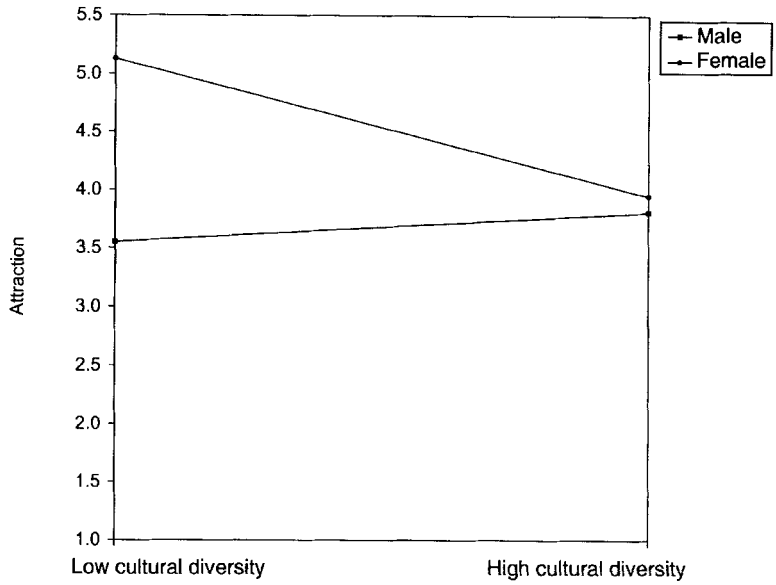

Figure 3. Applicant attraction for minorities as a function of participants' gender under low cultural diversity and high cultural diversity conditions.

diversity commitment does not appear to have a large detrimental effect on the attraction of nonminority males (63% vs. 68%).

Interestingly, minority women expressed less attraction to an organization when it made statements about diversity than when it did not. While the effects are not terribly large (86% would pursue employment under the low-diversity condition vs. 74% under the high-diversity condition), it does raise questions regarding the reaction of minority women to these policies. It has been proposed frequently that there is a stigma attached to affirmative action programs and other efforts to increase minority populations in organizations. This proposition has received some empirical support and shows that people perceive individuals as being less competent and qualified to achieve the positions they are in when there is an affirmative action program in place than when there is no affirmative action program (e.g., Garcia, Erskine, Hawn, & Casmay, 1981; Gilbert & Stead, 1999; Heilman, Block, & Lucas, 1992; Summers, 1991). Employees who attribute gaining employment because of their demographic characteristics rather than their qualifications are more likely to have negative perceptions of their competence and to report lower satisfaction with work, less satisfaction with supervisors and coworkers, and less psychological commitment to their organization (Chacko, 1982; Heilman, Kaplow, Amato, & Stathatos, 1993; Heilman et al.,

1996). Further, attitudes toward a group of individuals are negatively impacted by affirmative action plans (Maio & Esses, 1998).

Because minority women fill two protected classifications, they may have greater concerns about the stigma attached to being hired into organizations that expressly target minorities and females, and these concerns may outweigh the attractiveness of the policies themselves. This issue was addressed in a recent article by Richard, Fubara, and Castillo (2000), in which participants were asked what White males would think of them if the participant had been hired as part of a workforce diversity plan. Minority participants were more likely to indicate that White males would have negative perceptions of them and were more likely to have lower self-perceptions of competence. Unfortunately, this study did not compare the perceptions of nonminority women to those of minority women (only to minorities as a whole), so we could not tell whether minority women reacted more negatively because of their dual-minority status. Alternatively, minority women may be equally attracted under both conditions, and the difference in attraction under the two conditions may be simply an anomaly of a sample drawn from a population where no true difference exists.

The magnitude of the effects on applicant attraction of the interaction between individual characteristics and organizational statements examined here is both statistically and practically significant. However, the study is not without limitations. Importantly, the study focused on one type of job seeker whose information about the organization is obtained through a specific source; that is, juniors and seniors with business, economics, and communications majors who viewed recruitment brochures. Generalizations of these results must be made with these sample characteristics in mind. We do note, however, that previous studies have found that there are not major differences between responses of students soon to enter the permanent full-time market and those currently on the market (Crant & Bateman, 1990; Murphy, Thornton, & Reynolds, 1990).

A second limitation of this study stems from the fact that participants in our study were reacting to just one recruitment brochure. However, applicants do not typically evaluate job opportunities in a vacuum. It is possible that, when faced with multiple job opportunities, each with differing context and policies to choose from, attraction to the organization and to the policies depicted in this particular brochure would be different. However, we believe that this is not a significant weakness in the study design for two reasons. First, given that most of the participant pool is within 1 year of graduation, it is unrealistic to think that these students have not been exposed to previous recruitment efforts of organizations, and therefore have no context within which to judge the fictitious organization depicted in our study. Second, our concern is not with the attractiveness of this organization relative to others, but rather the impact of varying policies on applicant attraction. While it is true that the overall level of attraction to the organization might change given alternatives, it is not likely that the

applicants' reactions to the policies would be significantly different, even given alternative employment opportunities.

A related limitation is that we cannot know whether the relationships observed would exist when other organizational policies (e.g., compensation) are also allowed to vary. Future research could test the robustness of these findings by examining applicant preferences when several organizational policies (e.g., compensation or performance management policies) among multiple job choices are allowed to differ.

A final limitation of our investigation is its focus only on the effects on applicants' gender and race. We chose this focus because these demographic characteristics are often the target of corporate recruitment efforts. Nonetheless, we acknowledge that there is increasing awareness in both academe and in organizational practice that diversity management issues encompass a much broader range of demographic and personal characteristics than those investigated here. Additional studies incorporating a broader perspective for understanding the effects of diversity management policies on applicant attraction would be very useful.

It is interesting to note that the presence or absence of photographs supporting the teamwork or diversity message did not have any added impact on applicants' reactions over and above the textual statements, nor did the photographs interact with the text to either weaken or strengthen the message. While this may be a result of the brochure design (our photos were black and white and therefore may not have had much visual impact), the finding is consistent with the post hoc analyses of Williams and Bauer (1994) that also did not find any impact of photographs on applicant attraction. In these cases, it would appear that the text speaks louder than do the photographs.

Because the intent of our study was to examine the impact of diversity and teamwork statements on applicant attraction at the initial point of contact, our study cannot determine the importance of these policies at later stages of recruitment. Barber (1998) argued that the initial stage determines the pool of college applicants available to organizations at later stages of the recruitment process. Further, we note that Cable et al. (2000) found evidence regarding the impact of anticipatory socialization and suggest that it is likely that the messages sent by organizations early in recruitment do impact later stages of recruitment. Future research should explore the impact that various organizational policies shown to influence applicant attraction in the early recruitment stages (such as those examined in this study) have on later stages of recruitment.

Finally, the research presented here provides additional support for the notion that job applicants' perceptions of person–organization fit influence their intention to pursue employment with an organization by examining two explicit organizational values for teamwork and diversity. Continued research examining the importance of various organizational statements and policies at the initial

stages of applicant recruitment to applicant self-selection would help our understanding of the decision-making process of job applicants in the initial stages of their job search, and would provide valuable information to employers concerned with developing effective recruitment procedures. Studies that address these issues using field research are particularly important to demonstrate the actual impact of recruitment statements in attracting college students to organizations.

If organizations are going to be successful in capitalizing on teamwork and diversity in organizations as a source of sustainable competitive advantage, successfully targeting recruitment by organizations to applicants that will fit in a team environment and that are culturally diverse should be an important key to that success. To date, there is little empirical evidence to show that investments in changing recruitment materials pay off by attracting an applicant base that has the desired characteristics. The results presented in this paper suggest that advertising a teamwork orientation can expect to generate a smaller, but more team-oriented applicant pool. To the extent that individuals who would be a poor fit with the organization's teamwork culture self-select out of the applicant pool, the organization should benefit from reduced selection costs resulting in more positive hiring outcomes for the organization. Similarly, the results suggest that an organization advertising commitment to diversity can expect to have a proportionately larger pool of nonminority women and minority males than one that does not. To the extent that larger applicant pools result in greater numbers of qualified minority candidates, this should enable more positive hiring outcomes for the organization. The results of this study suggest that organizations may improve the likelihood of achieving recruitment goals through the use of targeted recruitment statements.

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Appendix

Summary of Factor Analysis for Teamwork Attitude (n = 181)

Item	Factor loadings		
	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3
Cognitive: Teams can more thoroughly evaluate options than any one individual can.	*.775*	-.021	-.050
Cognitive: I believe that teamwork can produce better results than individual efforts	*.833*	.235	.016
Cognitive: Working in teams stimulates innovation.	*.759*	.361	.091
Affective: I personally enjoy working with others.	.065	*.858*	.061
Affective: I prefer to work on group tasks rather than individual tasks.	.523	*.428*	.078
Affective: I like to interact with others on projects.	.442	*.731*	.134
Behavioral: I tend to be more creative when there are people around to stimulate my thoughts.	.573	-.025	*.471*
Behavioral: I am not afraid to voice my opinions at work.	.069	-.007	*.880*
Behavioral: I share my ideas freely with those I work with and encourage feedback	-.070	.447	*.653*

Note. Cronbach's α = .79. Extraction method = principal components analysis. Rotation method = varimax with Kaiser normalization. Eigenvalues ≥ 1. Terms in italics depict the three components comprising "attitude toward teamwork."